

adopted we could get through the work of the session in three-quarters of the time and do much better work.

I come now to a question which was not mentioned in the speech from the throne but which has been the subject of great public interest during the last month—espionage. The speech from the throne mentioned many things, most of which, as I have said, were mentioned when parliament met last year, but one thing it did not mention. It did not mention the one matter above all others that is occupying the attention of the Canadian people to-day. It did not mention the espionage proceedings that have been so much before the public.

On the day the government made its first announcement with respect to this matter I was given some intimation by the Prime Minister of the nature of the facts that had come to the attention of the government. On the same day, after the announcement had been made public, I issued a statement to the press that the government was to be commended for proceeding to take action on the basis of the facts in its possession. I have not since varied from the position that I took on that day.

When oaths are violated against the provisions of the Official Secrets Act, when information is improperly conveyed by civil servants in high ranking positions to the government of a foreign power, when these civil servants hold important positions as some did in this case in departments of government, such as the national research council, the office of the British high commissioner in Canada and one in a very confidential position in the office of the Prime Minister of Canada—

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Not in the Prime Minister's office, in the Department of External Affairs.

Mr. GRAYDON: A department the Prime Minister presides over.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: It is not the Prime Minister's office.

Mr. GRAYDON: The Prime Minister presides over it.

Mr. BRACKEN: I am glad to be corrected by the Prime Minister. It is more correct to say that one of these persons was in a very confidential position in the office of a department over which the Prime Minister presides. When, as we were informed the latter part of last week, these things are being done in some instances because of a higher loyalty than that to Canada, then under such condi-

tions it is high time that the facts of the matter should be speedily and thoroughly investigated and exposed and that those charged, if found guilty, should be brought to justice and that the public service of Canada be purged of all such influences of disloyalty and disaffection.

But there is a well recognized procedure that modern states follow in such instances, and that procedure guarantees certain rights to individuals who are charged with crimes against the state. In this case some sections of the public have become alarmed. It is charged that the government has resorted to star chamber methods and has denied to individuals certain rights guaranteed by law. We commend the government for searching out enemies of the state, particularly in the field of conspiring with representatives of governments of other powers, but the Canadian people in large numbers have become concerned lest in the carrying out of this duty the government is invading one of the inalienable rights that British justice has secured for individuals. It is feared by many that a dangerous precedent is being established.

In this respect, criticism of the government may well await the government's fuller explanation of its departure from ordinary procedure in such matters. But we will expect a clear and explicit statement from the government as to why, in its judgment, such extraordinary procedure was necessary. Until that statement is forthcoming the government cannot expect to be immune from doubt on the part of many who, while wishing to search out the guilty, will wish to preserve inviolate the rights of individuals that British justice has not denied for generations past. The Prime Minister last week, in reply to questions, promised to make a full statement on this matter in his speech to follow mine to-day. He answered it partly the other day. I wish now before he speaks to direct some questions to him, which I trust he will answer in the course of his address.

The order in council initiating the proceedings was dated October 6, 1945. One question I would ask is this: why was this matter held in suspense from that date until a few weeks ago? I am sure the Prime Minister will be answering that; probably he would have done so in any event, if I had not asked it.

Will the Prime Minister advise the house whether this matter was the subject of discussion with the governments of the United States and Great Britain?

Will the Prime Minister give us some indication as to how widely these subversive